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FM AMEMBASSY ANKARA
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RUEHGB/AMEMBASSY BAGHDAD 0581
RUEHAH/AMEMBASSY ASHGABAT 1836
RUEHKB/AMEMBASSY BAKU 1325
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RUEHRO/AMEMBASSY ROME 6492
RUEHBS/USEU BRUSSELS
RUEHVK/AMCONSUL VLADIVOSTOK 0082
RUEHDA/AMCONSUL ADANA 0437
RUEHIT/AMCONSUL ISTANBUL 9878
RUEHBS/USEU BRUSSELS
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RHMFIUU/39ABG INCIRLIK AB TU
RHMFIUU/39CES INCIRLIK AB TU
RUEHPH/CDC ATLANTA GA
RUEAUSA/DEPT OF HHS WASHDC
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA 1441
RUEHAST/USOFFICE ASTANA 0079
RUEHZN/EST COLLECTIVE
RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHDC

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 ANKARA 000861

SIPDIS

USAID FOR TROSTLE, BLANCHET AND CARROLL
HHS FOR WSTEIGER/PBUDASHEWITZ
FAS FOR ITP/MACKE/THOMAS, CMP/DLP/WETZEL, FAS/JDEVER
FAS PASS FSIS AND APHIS
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SIPDIS

E.O. 12958:N/A
TAGS: [TBIO](#) [AMED](#) [EAID](#) [CASC](#) [SENV](#) [EFIN](#) [EAGR](#) [TU](#) [KFLU](#)
SUBJECT: AVIAN INFLUENZA: EMBASSY DE-BRIEFS TURKEY MOH

REF: A. ANKARA 630, B. ANKARA 341, C. ANKARA 263 AND

PREVIOUS.

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11. SUMMARY. Embassy AI team de-briefed GOT MOH officials on the conclusions and observations of the interagency AI team that visited Turkey January 16-22 (Ref C). Given the apparent respite in new human AI cases, MOH said it is moving from crisis to risk management AI. World Bank negotiations on an AI package have been postponed to March. End Summary.

From Crisis to Risk Management

¶2. Using the cleared USG AI Team paper, Econ Counselor and Embassy AI Working Group de-briefed Ministry of Health Assistant Director General Ali Coskun and his team on February 17. We stressed Turkey's transparent and cooperative response, but noted the need to improve lab capacity and communication outreach. The MOH Reps expressed appreciation for the USG AI team's work (Public Health Specialist Toker Erguder who accompanied the team to Van was present.) The MOH officials also expressed appreciation for the contributions of CDC officials Tim Uyeki, who helped check pediatric patients in Van, and Stephen Lindstrom, who had participated in the MOH team response effort at the Ankara lab.

¶3. Communicable Disease Expert Mehmet Ali Torunoglu stated that Turkey had moved from crisis to risk management, noting that there had been no new human cases since January 13. He stated that out of 21 confirmed cases (of which, 12 confirmed by the WHO), there had been only 4 deaths, suggesting that further analysis was needed to explain Turkey's seeming low mortality rate.

¶4. The MOH officials noted that the World Bank coordinated support package would strengthen key infrastructure such as lab capacity, as well as improve communication capacity and augment stocks of personal protective equipment. They noted that they continued to coordinate closely with UNICEF on communication strategies. (Note: an Ankara-based WB official confirmed that USAID was working on a potential \$1 million contribution and that that WB negotiations with the GOT had been postponed to after March 7. End Note.)

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¶5. The MOH officials asserted that the parallel Health and Agriculture crisis centers (with sharing of personnel) were a very effective approach for Turkey, as opposed to the creation of a single unit under the Prime Minister. Moreover, they noted that while there was good cooperation with the Ministry of Agriculture (MARA) on crisis response, their long-term objectives for backyard fowl were not the same. (MOH advocates eradication; MARA advocates mitigation and careful reintroduction.)

¶6. The MOH officials described on-going scientific analyses, comprising the range from clinical, virological, and epidemiological. The officials described the choice of sending samples to Istanbul or Ankara labs as purely geographical. The MOH provided the most current case definition (revised with WHO) to MED Officer.

A Few New Cases - Culling Continues

¶7. GOT MARA confirmed that new animal cases had been detected in backyard fowl in three locations in Rize Province and two in Elazig Province in the east and culling operations had commenced there. Since the onset of new cases in December-January 2006, the GOT reports that 2,246,954 birds have been culled among backyard fowl mainly in eastern and central Anatolia.
Wilson